

COMPANY "C"
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

RJE/rdb
3120
2 Sep 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion (Attn: S-3)
Subj: Command Chronology
Ref: (a) BnO 3480.1
Encl: (1) Command Chronology

1. In accordance with reference (a) enclosure (1) is submitted:

R. J. Esposito
R. J. ESPOSITO

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Marine Corps History and Museums
in accordance with the provisions
of CMO ltr Ser 009D323/232095 of
21 Feb 1979

[Signature] Signature Date 2/1/97

C "C", 1st AT BN

Aug 66

TAB B

COMMAND CHRONOLOGYI. Organizational Data1. Locations

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| a. Company Headquarters | BT 548018 |
| b. 1st Platoon | |
| (1) Heavy Section | BT 548018 |
| (2) Light Section | BT 559038 |
| c. 2nd Platoon | BS 663984 |
| d. 3rd Platoon | BS 575922 |

2. Period covered by Report. 1 August through 31 August 1966.

3. Principle Billets

| | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| CO | Capt R. J. ESPOSITO |
| XO | 1stLt D. R. WEST |
| 1stSgt | 1stSgt F. N. JORDAN |
| 1stPlat Cmr | SSgt V. C. DUENAS |
| 2ndPlat Cmr | 2ndLt M. J. BOREK |
| 3rdPlat Cmr | 2ndLt H. L. REED |

II. Narrative of Significant Events

Events in August were largely a continuation of trends and situations as in June. First platoon remained at Chu Lai Defense Command, under operational control of "B" Company until 26 August when returned to company CP for operation JACKSON minus one vehicle C-13 of the light section which remained at Chu Lai Defense Command.

On 4 and 5 August 1966 escorted convoys to Quang Ngai and Tam Ky respectively.

On 12 August 1966 the section at I/3/7 moved to platoon CP at M/3/7. Light section moved to company CP.

On 18 August 1966 3rd platoon on mechanized recon at which time lead onto saw 60mm mortar rounds electrically wired.

On 19 August 1966 C-31 and C-35 escorted convoy to Quang Ngai. Heavy section 1st platoon moved CP location to BT 515065.

27 August through 29 August 1966 company was on immediate standby for operation JACKSON.

ENCLOSURE (1)

HEADQUARTERS
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:DMH:tjs
3123
27 Aug 1966

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 5th Marine Regiment
Subj: ~~Combat Operations~~ After Action Report; Operation COLORADO
Encl: (1) After Action Report; Operation COLORADO

1. In accordance with your request, enclosure (1) is herewith furnished.

R. E. Harris
R. E. HARRIS

1st ANTITANK BATTALION;
S & C LOG NO. 640-66
COPY 16 OF 27

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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TAB C

3123
27 Aug 1966

1. Code Name. COLORADO, a joint USMC-RVNAF search and destroy operation.
2. Dates of Operation. Company Participation: 051900-201010H August 1966.
3. Location. Company B operated in both Tam Ky District and Thang Binh District of Quang Tin Province.
4. Control Headquarters. 5th Marine Regiment, Colonel C. F. WIDDECKE, Commanding.
5. Task Organization

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Company B (-)(Rein), 1st Antitank Battalion | |
| Capt J. E. FELKER | Commanding Officer |
| 1stLt R. E. TIMBERG | Executive Officer |
| SSgt H. J. FOGLE | 2nd Platoon (-) |
| SSgt A. F. HOLMAN JR. | 2nd Platoon (-), Company A |
| 1stLt W. L. BUCHANAN | 3rd Platoon |
| 1stLt D. M. HUTSON | Det, H&S Company |
| 1stLt F. S. ROE | Det, H&S Company |
6. Supporting Forces. None.
7. Intelligence. See 1st Marine Division INESUM's for the operational period and Annex B (Intelligence) to 5th Marines Operation Order 322-66.
8. Mission. Provide direct support to the 5th Marines; be prepared for employment anywhere in the Regimental Zone as directed by the Commanding Officer, 5th Marines.
9. Concept of Operations. Company B was to move to the operating area in three increments. One platoon, on D-day, was to move into a blocking position athwart the Hiep Duc Road in the vicinity of BT 130360, with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines; providing convoy security enroute. The other two platoons were to act as security forces for the Regimental Command Group and ISA convoys to Tam Ky. Upon arrival in the operating area and for the duration of the operation, Company B was to be prepared for employment in a direct fire support role or in any other capacity as directed by the Commanding Officer, 5th Marines.
10. Execution.

D-1 (5 August)
051900H. The 3rd Platoon departed the Company B Command Post with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines to establish the blocking force athwart the Hiep Duc Road in the vicinity of the Hill 53 complex. (BT 130360). Forces were in position at 060600H.

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27 Aug 1966

052400H. The 2nd Platoon (Company A) departed the Company Command Post as security forces for the Regimental Command Group convoy. This convoy arrived at Tam Ky at 060430H. One Ontos remained in a defensive position covering the Song Tam Ky Bridge providing security for six JF-4 Refuelers which required a pontoon bridge to cross the river. This Ontos arrived at Tam Ky at 060700H.

D-Day (6 August)

050900H. The Company Command Group and the 2nd Platoon moved with the ISA convoy to Tam Ky. Ontos provided security. Convoy arrived at Tam Ky at 061300H.

061500H. The Commanding Officer received a frag order from the Commanding Officer, 5th Marines directing the two platoons at Tam Ky and the Company Headquarters to displace to Hill 53 to support 3/5.

061510H. Departed Tam Ky.

061710H. Arrived Hill 53. No incidents.

061730H - 061815H. The Commanding Officer and the Commanding Officer, 3/5 made a reconnaissance of the battalion sector to select Ontos firing positions.

061900H. All Ontos in positions as follows:

Heavy section at 129368 supporting K/3/5

Light section at 135357 supporting M/3/5

Light section at 130370 supporting K/3/5

Light section at 136375 supporting K/3/5

Light section at 136370 supporting K/3/5

D plus 1 (7 August)

070730H. The Company Commander met with the Commanding Officer, 3/5. General Ontos/Infantry patrol plans formulated.

070900H. The Commanding Officer and Platoon Commanders coordinated with the Commanding Officer, 1/3/5 and completed detailed patrol plans.

071015H. All Ontos/Infantry patrols departed the Command Post. Two patrols were assigned the mission of screening the battalion perimeter approximately 100 meters to the northeast and southeast of the Battalion Command Post. The third patrol was assigned the mission of searching out and destroying snipers who had been firing at helicopters entering the landing zone.

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27 Aug 1966

D plus 2 (8 August)

081530H - 081730H. The 3rd Platoon provided direct fire support to a platoon from M/3/5 in a sweep from the Battalion Command Post through Chau Xuan (2) (BT 118348) and back. No contact.

081800H. The 3rd Platoon was placed in direct support of L/3/5.

D plus 3 (9 August)

No change. Ontos continued to occupy security positions.

D plus 4 (10 August)

102150L. The CO received frag order to provide four Ontos to escort artillery to Hill 29 (BT 230325).

102325H. Convoy departed 3/5 CP with SSgt. FOGLE commanding the Ontos escort.

110050H. Convoy arrived Hill 29. No incidents.

110150H. Convoy returned to 3/5 Command Post.

D plus 5 (11 August)

110840H. Received frag order; "displace in two echelons with the Bravo (3/5) Command Group to Hill 29."

111015H. 1st echelon (Executive Officer, 2nd Platoon and 3rd Platoon) underway for Hill 29, providing security for artillery. Arrived at Hill 29 at 111115H.

111220H. 2nd echelon (Commanding Officer and 2nd Platoon(-)(Company A) at old 3/5 Command Post when Bravo Command Group received small arms fire from BT 130365 while marshalling vehicles on road. Ontos denied permission to fire major caliber rounds.

111235H 2nd echelon departed with Ontos providing convoy security. Arrived Hill 29 at 111330H.

111500H. The 3rd Platoon displaced to Tam Ky on order of the CO, 2/11.

111700H. Received Commanding Officer, 5th Marines frag order to displace remaining elements from Hill 29 to Tam Ky on the morning of 12 August.

D plus 6 (12 August)

120750H. Commenced displacements ordered.

120830H. Displacement completed; assumed on-call status.

121600H. The Commanding Officer met with the Commanding Officer, 2/5 and coordinated Ontos support of that unit for an operation to commence the following day. Plans called for combined Ontos/Tank forces to move into supporting fire positions on Hill 30 vicinity BT 210290 and BT 198327. A liaison team, consisting of the Executive Officer and one radio operator, was to land with 2/5 and coordinate Ontos fire.

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121830H. A heavy thunderstorm delayed the planned Ontos/Tank operation for at least twelve hours.

D plus 7 (13 August). The morning and early afternoon were devoted to reconnaissance of roads following the previous night's storm and to revising plans to support 2/5. The tank company did not feel it could provide support due to the effect of the heavy rain on the terrain. An estimate of the situation indicated that it would be extremely difficult to reach supporting positions on Hill 29 due to the nature of the terrain following the storm. With the tank company withdrawing from the operation the Commanding Officer decided to make the northern thrust to BT 198327 and set in as a blocking force in the vicinity of the railroad tracks. Excellent fields of fire for supporting 2/5 existed at this position. The Commanding Officer's plan was approved by the Commanding Officer, 5th Marines and the necessary coordination with FSCC was accomplished at 1630H. The company again displaced to Hill 29 in order to be in a more favorable position to jump off early the following morning. Necessary coordination was completed by radio with the Commanding Officer, 2/5 in the evening.

D plus 8 (14 August)

140200H. Ontos support of 2/5 cancelled by Commanding Officer, 5th Marines as 2/5 diverted northward. Company B was placed in direct support of 1/5 and 2/11 to provide security for artillery firing positions on Hill 29.

140700H - 141200H. Ontos ran two patrols with elements of 1/5 out to 1000 meters of the perimeter positions. No contact.

D plus 9 (15 August)

150700H - 151030H. Ontos ran one local security patrol with infantry. Ontos continued in a security role.

D plus 10 (16 August)

161230H - 161830H. A light section from the 3rd Platoon provided security for a 2/11 reconnaissance party from Hill 29, south along route #1, and inland about seven miles along the Tien Phuoc Road. Light sniper fire received. No fire returned.

161325H. One VC sniper was shot by a member of Company B after he opened fire on a water run party returning from Tam Ky. Action occurred in grid square 2529.

D plus 11 (17 August). Company B remained on Hill 29 providing security for artillery.

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D plus 12 (18 August)

180700H - 181000H. Company B displaced in two echelons to Tam Ky, providing convoy security for artillery. Upon arrival reverted to on-call status.

D plus 13 (19 August). No change.

D plus 14 (20 August)

201010H. Company B returned to the Chu Lai Combat Base.11. Results. One VC KIA (probable).12. Administrative Matters

- a. Supply. No problems encountered. LSA support excellent.
- b. Maintenance. All problems encountered were corrected by the crewmen or the two mechanics in the company headquarters group.
- c. Treatment of Casualties. No casualties.
- d. Transportation. No problems.
- e. Communications. Fair to good; excellent with PRC-25s.
- f. Medical Evaluation. No comment.

13. Special Equipment and Techniques. None utilized.

14. Commander's Analysis. Ontos units were employed effectively during the operation. Infantry commanders at all levels attempted to utilize the Ontos in direct fire support roles. Company B was only put in a static defensive role when, because of the flow of the combat situation, no other missions existed elsewhere. The only problem that was encountered was a seemingly ungrounded fear of allowing the Ontos to fire major rounds. If the Ontos is going to provide the fire support it was designed for, it must be understood that Ontos crewman are trained professional Marines who can fight their vehicle safely and effectively.

15. Recommendations

- a. Continue to utilize the Ontos in missions which exploit the vehicle's inherent firepower and mobility.
- b. Do not over control the use of its major caliber weapons i.e. give greater control to the antitank unit leader in the use of his vehicles.

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